

Appn. No. 10/697,220
Response dated Oct. 14, 2005
Reply to Office Action of July 14, 2005
Docket No. BOC9-2003-0050 (421)

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are made in response to the Office Action of July 14, 2005 (Office Action). As this response is timely filed within the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due.

At page 2 of the Office Action, Claims 1-6, 8-13, and 15-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,275,575 to Wu (hereinafter Wu) in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2003/0035381 to Chen, *et al.* (hereinafter Chen). At page 13, Claims 7 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu in view of Chen and further in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2004/0199580 to Zhakov, *et al.* (hereinafter Zhakov).

Independent Claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 have been amended to further emphasize certain aspects of Applicants' invention. Dependent Claims 3, 4, 10 and 18 have also been amended to further emphasize specific aspects of the invention and to maintain consistency with the claims from which each depends. The amendments as discussed herein, are supported throughout the Specification. No new matter has been introduced by virtue of the claims amendments.

I. Applicants' Invention

It may be helpful to reiterate certain aspects of Applicants' invention prior to addressing the cited references. The invention provides a method, system, and apparatus for aggregating teleconference services using an interactive voice response system. More particularly, the present invention provides an interactive voice response service that can be accessed by subscribers. With the invention, a user does not need to track and remember a telephone number and access code for each teleconference in

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which the user is scheduled to participate; the user need only remember at most one telephone number and personal identifier for the interactive voice response system. One embodiment of the invention, typified by amended independent Claim 1, is a method of aggregating conference calls by registering a caller with an interactive voice response system, and authorizing access to a calendar system containing at least a telephone number for a scheduled conference call. (Specification, paragraph [0028]; see also paragraph [0022].)

The method further includes accessing the calendar system used by the registered caller to determine teleconference data, and, at an approximate time of the conference call, automatically calling the telephone number for the conference call. According to the method, the contact is then established with the registered caller. The method further includes joining the registered caller with the conference call.

II. The Claims Define Over The Prior Art

As noted above, independent Claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 were deemed unpatentable over Wu in view of Chen. Wu is directed to a method and system for remotely accessing a cross-platform telephone conference system for the purpose of coordinating and initiating multi-point telephone conference meetings. Chen is directed to teleconferencing and, more particularly, to setting-up and controlling a teleconference using a data network regardless of the individual's ability to directly access conferencing capabilities.

By contrast, Applicants' invention utilizes intelligent agents and network based software application modules (i.e., contact lists, email, calendars, etc.) to facilitate the setup and initiation of telephone conference calls from locations remote from the telephone conference server and associated equipment. According to Applicants' invention, more particularly, a caller registered with a system obtains authorization to

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access a calendar system that contains a determines teleconference data. Applicants' invention calls a telephone number contained in the calendar system so that the registered caller can be joined to the conference call at the appropriate time.

It is stated at page 3 of the office action that "Wu does not explicitly teach accessing a calendar", but that Chen discloses accessing a database 34 in conjunction with use of a schedule element 50 to set up a conference call and to determine telephone numbers to be joined in the conference call. Neither Wu nor Chen, however, teach an authentication process for accessing the calendar, as taught by Applicants' invention and expressly recited in amended Claims 1, 8, 15, and 16.

It is noted at page 13 of the Office Action that, indeed, "Chen and Wu do not teach authenticating each conference call participant prior to joining each conference call participant to the conference call", but that "Zhakov, *et al.* teaches authenticating each conference call participant prior to joining each conference call participant to the conference call."

Zhakov discloses a software suite for enabling and managing a conference hosted on a communication network. One aspect of Zhakov, noted at page 13 of the Office Action, is the authenticating of each participant to a conference call. Specifically, Zhakov discloses a bridge application 204 for "physically conducting the conference room including enabling ports, allocation of resources including bandwidth and port reservation." (Paragraph [0077].) The conference bridge 204, according to Zhakov, "authenticates participants . . . before they can be allowed to participate in the conference."

Applicants respectfully point out that Applicants' invention is different from Zhakov in that the authentication, according to Applicants' invention, is the authorizing of access to a calendar system, not authorizing access to a conference call. The calendar system to which authorization is granted with Applicants' invention, moreover, contains

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at least a telephone number corresponding to a telephone number for a scheduled conference call. Once authorization is granted in Applicants' invention, a caller registered with an interactive voice system accesses the calendar system that determines teleconference data, and the telephone number for the conference call is automatically called so that the registered caller can be joined with the conference call, as recited in each of the amended independent claims.

None of the references teach or suggest these features. In particular, Zhakov teaches authentication of callers "before they can be allowed to participate in a conference." Zhakov does not remotely suggest an authorization that determines whether one is a registered caller who should be given access to a calendar system that determines teleconference data. Indeed, Zhakov does not disclose or suggest a calendar system. Applicants respectfully assert, moreover, that the prior art fails to provide any suggestion, motivation, or teaching for extending Zhakov's authentication of conference call participants to encompass the authorizing of a registered call so that the registered caller can access a calendar system, as recited in each of the amended independent claims.

Applicants respectfully assert, therefore, that even combined the references fail to teach or suggest each feature of amended independent Claims 1, 8, 15, and 16, and that the claims thus define over the prior art. Applicants, moreover, respectfully assert that whereas the remaining claims each depend from one of the amended independent claims, the dependent claims likewise define over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the

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Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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Gregory A. Nelson, Registration No. 30,577
Richard A. Hinson, Registration No. 47,652
Marc A. Boillot, Registration No. 56,164
AKERMAN SENTERFITT
Customer No. 40987
Post Office Box 3188
West Palm Beach, FL 33402-3188
Telephone: (561) 653-5000

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